

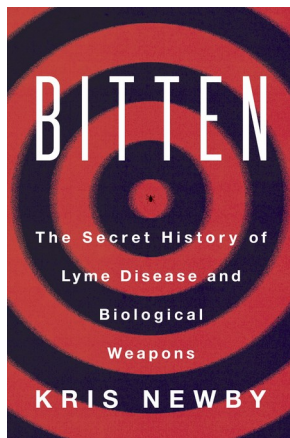
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Bitten

The Secret History of Lyme Disease and Biological Weapons

Kris Newby



“Full of fascinating and sometimes-disturbing information, little of which is widely known.”

—**Kirkus Review (starred)**

The first reported cases of Lyme disease surfaced in 1968; a half century later, CDC scientists believe there could be more than 400,000 new cases in the US every year. As this and other debilitating tick-borne diseases continue to spread, their origins have remained elusive. Some believe global warming is fueling the epidemic, others attribute it to human migration. But the fundamental question persists: where did Lyme disease come from?

This mystery prompted Stanford University science writer and Lyme disease survivor **Kris Newby** to launch an investigation that led her to startling discoveries linking the outbreak to America’s clandestine biological warfare program. In **BITTEN: The Secret History of Lyme Disease and Biological Weapons** (Harper Wave; May 14, 2019; ISBN: 978-006-289-6278; 352 pages; \$26.99)—a riveting work of scientific reportage and biography that reads like a thriller—Newby reveals the story of Willy Burgdorfer, the man who discovered the microbe behind the disease, and his role in covering up evidence that could implicate another tick-borne organisms in the original outbreak.

“Shortly before his death, Willy told me that he’d left something important out of his seminal Lyme discovery paper,” Newby writes. “He believed that the outbreak of tick-borne diseases that started around Lyme, Connecticut, was caused by a bioweapons release which he was told to cover it up. It was a stunning admission that could explain why the condition that we call Lyme disease is so hard to diagnose and treat.”

As she reveals for the first time the secret history of the Lyme disease discovery, Newby presents facts long kept from the public, including:

- Burgdorfer's role in turning fleas, mosquitoes and ticks into biological weapons, and examples of field tests where these living weapons were released on an unsuspecting public.
- A government-funded study where more than 100,000 radioactive lone star ticks, the aggressive ones that cause meat allergies in humans, were released on the Atlantic coast.
- An eyewitness account of how the U.S. military dropped disease-carrying ticks on Cuba.
- Military experiments to turn rickettsias — virus-like bacteria from the spotted fever family — into air-borne weapons, and how a similar rickettsia was found in the blood of almost all of the original Lyme outbreak patients.

Kris Newby is an award-winning science writer at Stanford University and the senior producer of the Lyme disease documentary, *Under Our Skin*, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and was a 2010 Oscar semifinalist. Previously, Newby was a technology writer for Apple and other Silicon Valley companies. She lives in Palo Alto.

BITTEN is a superb, meticulous work of narrative journalism that takes readers on a journey as she investigates these and other important claims, raising new theories on how on how a second microbe may be contributing to lingering symptoms—and why the government is so reluctant to classify chronic Lyme as a disease.

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